

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 00875 311314Z

ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 IGA-02 L-03 AGRE-00

OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 /093 W

-----100328 311322Z /53

O R 311138Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6347

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 0875

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EAGR, AF, PK, IN, US

SUBJ: TRANSPORT OF INDIAN WHEAT THROUGH PAKISTAN: AFGHAN
REQUEST FOR US ASSISTANCE

REFS: A) STATE 22280 (AIDAC), B) 77 KABUL 9023

1. COMMENTS BY AFGHAN AMBASSADOR KARIM AND PRESIDENT OF
FOOD PROCUREMENT ASEF (REPORTED REFTEL A) NOTWITHSTANDING, WE
WERE TOLD BY MINISTER OF COMMERCE JALALLAR (ON DECEMBER 28)
THAT THE AFGHAN-INDIAN WHEAT BARTER DEAL HAD FAILED
"BECAUSE OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS" (REFTEL B). THE
INDIAN AMBASSADOR IN KABUL, S.K. SINGH, WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE
OF JALALLAR'S REMARKS, ALSO TOLD AMBASSADOR ELIOT ON
JANUARY 2, THAT PROBLEMS WITH THE PAKS HAD HELD UP AND
POSSIBLY UNDONE THE PROSPECTIVE AGREEMENT. THUS, WE
ARE CONVINCED THAT THE DEAL HAS FALLEN THROUGH -- AND
NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF TRANSPORT PROBLEMS. THE ARRANGEMENT
WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE AFGHANS: THEY
WOULD HAVE HAD TO REPAY THE WHEAT IN KIND WITHIN TWO
YEARS AND PAY TRANSPORT COSTS BOTH WAYS. THE COMBINA-
TION OF THESE DISADVANTAGES, PLUS THE PAK TRANSPORT
DIFFICULTIES, WAS WHAT PROBABLY CAUSED THE AFGHANS TO
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DROP THE IDEA.

2. EVEN IF OUR PERCEPTIONS ARE INCORRECT AND THERE IS
STILL SOME FLICKER OF LIFE IN THE ARRANGEMENT, WE
SHOULD STAY OUT OF IT. IT WOULD, FIRSTLY, BE AGAINST
OUR COMMERCIAL INTERESTS TO PROMOTE PURCHASES OF INDIAN
WHEAT AT THE POSSIBLE EXPENSE OF OUR OWN WHEAT SALES

PROGRAM. SECONDLY, THE QUESTION OF TRANSIT RIGHTS IS
CURRENTLY UNDER DISCUSSION BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN
AND WILL BE A TOPIC ON INDIAN MINISTER OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS VAJPAYEE'S AGENDA DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT
TO ISLAMABAD. I ASSUME EMBASSIES NEW DELHI AND
LALAMABAD AND THE DEPARTMENT AGREE WE SHOULD STAY OUT
OF THE MIDDLE OF THIS ONE.
ELIOT

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 31 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Reason:
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TAGS: PFOR, EAID, EAGR, AF, PK, IN, US
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